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ABSTRACT

Oral/aural skills (1) are a major vocational requirement for a student graduating in the language field, (2) are an essential, academically valid element in the language learning process, and (3) enhance the student's overall intellectual development. If a communicative language curriculum is designed carefully, it will integrate all of these elements and meet both the social and the academic needs of the modern university curriculum. The language teaching profession should proceed to develop a communicative methodology, gradually creating a research base where it is lacking. (MSE)

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COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS AND THE MODERN LANGUAGES DEGREE

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COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS AND THE MODERN LANGUAGES DEGREE

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The subject proposed to me for this talk was 'What we should be doing'. The temptation could have been to indulge in a polemic exercise, a ritual blood-letting, but this would be pointless in the present company. Moreover, it appears to me that what we need is a clear academic evaluation, a scientific, factual account. If oral-aural skills are ultimately to be established in the universities on a sounder footing we should take a clear look at what kind of footing that might be and the academic grounds for proposing so major a reform in language teaching objectives and methods. I propose, therefore, to offer a critical review of the examined language-teaching curriculum and to assess the proper place of oral-aural skills within this. In the process I would simply note the wisdom of David Wilkins' statement that: 'the bias towards writing could have been corrected without a compensating bias towards speech. A proper balance between the two was all that was needed.'[1]

There appear to me to be three tenable viewpoints on oral-aural skills.

1) That they are **not** an academic study area but a skill and are legitimately dealt with through allowing for residence abroad topped up with conversation classes.
2) That they **do** form a valid academic exercise and should be placed on a proper footing alongside the written skills but separately from them.
3) That they are in vocational terms a major requirement of a graduating linguist AND that they are an essential, academically-valid element in a valid language learning process and further that they enhance the overall intellectual performance of the student. Moreover without this approach to language-learning, claims to have 'studied the language' in systematic terms are shallow.

Of these three, the last is the one I wish to propose.

I shall, therefore, defend a number of propositions in support of this position:

(1) The first proposition is that there are outside social constraints and internal academic constraints on language teaching in universities which we are not at liberty to ignore. This is not merely because we cannot ignore social and economic life outside our walls but because, as Tony Lodge has outlined, good academic arguments undermine our claims to fulfil a valid academic function in our present approach.
2) That it is possible to construct a language learning syllabus which would answer both social and academic requirements.

3) That research and experience suggest an appropriate language learning method.
4) That, as Daniel Coste writes: 'L'approche communicative a eu pour effet de substituer à des certitudes apparentes des questions réelles.'[2] In this situation the new curriculum and method must be intellectually and academically fire-proof. There will therefore be a need for a sustained research and development programme for which the broader teaching community has had little training and for which there is currently no research base.

In other words, there is no alternative, it is a viable course of action and it has major research and development implications.

I. SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC CONSTRAINTS ON UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE DEPARTMENTS

In no part of this paper do I argue against the view that the function of the universities is to train the high-achievers in both skills and intellect. However we form part of an educational system and our students leave us to enter the professions. They are vocational as well as intellectual animals. It is therefore usually acknowledged that university language departments must phase with language teaching in schools and that major developments in secondary level teaching should be noted in tertiary education. I note in this connection just two documents. The first is the recent DES statement on Foreign Languages in the school curriculum in which it is said that 'Discussions so far on draft national criteria for examining at 16-plus are concentrating on changes in the balance of skills away from writing and in favour of oral competence, the use of language more directly related to the demands of everyday communication.' This document has been formally welcomed by the CVCP and by the NCML together with all major national language associations.

The second is the Report of the Scottish Joint Working Party on assessment in foreign languages at 16, the 'Munn-Dunning' development. In their present form, prior to publication in May this year, the Working Party's recommendations are that syllabus and assessment should have as their primary objective, the development of communicative competence and confidence among pupils. By this they understand real language in real use, enabling the language learner to speak, listen and read in conditions which are as authentic as possible. It is the Joint Working Party's intention not merely to give more prominence to the oral aural skills but to swing the nature of oral work much closer towards purposeful exchanges.

The situation in schools has not stood still over the period in which pressure for communicative aims in school language-teaching level has mounted. The decline in the uptake of languages at school is well documented. The deterioration in the position of other languages than French has continued unabated. Studies in Scotland have shown that the overall decline conceals a more significant move away from languages by the high achievers at school,

male AND female.[3] The causes pinpointed have been variously identified but I would highlight some in particular:

1) Disaffection with courses at school which do not generate useful skills.
2) The belief (true or false) that languages, in their present form, have no vocational or cash-surrender value.
3) The choice faced by pupils between unpalatable language courses and alternative courses in sciences which are perceived to be more useful.

In the process school language classes are increasingly deserted by the very ablest linguists. Of those who survive this obstacle course, a small minority opt for languages in 5th and 6th form, increasingly because of lack of aptitude for science, but still in some cases, doggedly, because of love for language. We then face this minority with courses at university in which practical language skills - which have carried pupils right through school - suddenly become a minor concern and we offer courses devised not for the able linguist but for the student of humanities with a parallel aptitude for languages. It might be said that the A-level with its strong literary bias is a sufficient guide for intending university students and a reasonable training for the language-degree candidate. Yet if we deduce from this that 16-18 courses are suitable, given university conditions, we should also note the strong resistance to the A-level in present form that has built up amongst language associations, in the Inspectorate, Headmasters' Association and finally the DES consultative document. French 16-19: a new perspective merely summarises general opinion in stating that 'The course at the post 16-plus stage must, then, prepare the student for real communication and communication is always purposeful.'

If, however, you believe that an A-level based on the study of literature and on translation within the literary registers is in the interests of the pupil's academic development, then you might consult an applied linguist who notes that:

> as a technique of teaching meaning, translation is in the long run unsound ... for learning to be complete there must be contrast ... language teaching has been and still is much more occupied with instilling a general system of language than with enabling the pupil to modulate his language in accordance with features of the social situation ... The study of literature may familiarise the learner with a more formal style although this may not be of great practical value ... If he converses with a native speaker, he will find that he is using a more formal style than the person he is talking to.[4]

The same writer notes, moreover, that:

> I know of no clear evidence that the best way to develop unconscious mastery of the rules of a language is through the initial conscious

> learning of those rules ... it is the informally reported experience of many learners that rules of language learned in this way are rarely fully assimilated and continue to interfere with the spontaneous use of language; even if one believes that every language learner has to acquire the rules of the target language, the question of HOW they are best acquired is still left open.
>
> Most modern methodologists argue against methods which depend on the pupil acquiring an explicit knowledge of the rules of language structure and instead recommend a more inductive approach to learning.

and that

> to use and understand a language we need a communicative as well as a grammatical competence.[5]

There is a crise de foi amongst many language teachers in schools who are aware that a root cause of the decline in their and our subject is the linguistic diet they are forced to offer to match the requirements of examinations based on university entrance requirements. O-levels are devised as a staging post for those proceeding to A-level and are unsuited to those who seek to go no further than O-level. The A-level diet is based not on the needs of the language learner, but on the present diet a student will face once at university. There the linguistic diet is one in which practical mastery of the language rules as revealed by fluent performance is not the primary objective. Instead universities tend still to see this as an explicit knowledge of the rules governing language performance and the trained capacity to translate, with the claim that this encourages accuracy and precision in the use of language. There is indeed a fair consensus amongst informed linguists behind the view that translation is in fact useful as part of a language learning method but that it actively inhibits linguistic performance if used in isolation. It might well be replied by traditionalists that between them, the literary reading programme, conversation classes and residence abroad ensure that the translation technique is not used in isolation, but in response to this I note just two facts:

1) The increasing emphasis over the last thirty years on literary study in the traditional language and literature degree has been accompanied by an apparent deterioration in performance in the prose and version, and by major concern over the performance in the French essay.
2) There has been no scientific evaluation of the effectiveness of traditional methods in achieving their stated objectives. Even if present objectives were sound, therefore, there is no valid evidence to suggest that we achieve them.

In his Aspects of French Language Study at Birkbeck (1973), Michel Blanc endorses the statement by Binet and Darbelnet that:

> Si la traduction est avant tout une discipline comparée, il s'ensuit qu'elle suppose connus les objets qu'elle rapproche, à savoir les deux langues en présence ... on s'est rendu compte, il y a déjà longtemps, que le thème et la version ne sont profitables que si on les pratique à l'intérieur d'un domaine préalablement exploré par d'autres procédés.

It really does become difficult either to sustain present objectives on theoretically sound grounds or to claim that we in fact come anywhere near achieving these objectives by present teaching methods.

There is therefore a fundamental absurdity in allowing the continuation of a situation known to disregard the needs of pupils and teachers in schools, to dissuade many of the ablest language students at school from continuing, to be against the national interest itself, and to do so in the name of language studies at degree level.

The reference here to the 'national interest' relates to the massive documentation which has accrued over recent years on the social and vocational needs of the language graduate in language skill-terms, and on the needs of industry and commerce. We could quote the British Overseas Trade Board Report, the York University Report[6] and Christine Wilding's able digest.[7] We could quote the Report of the US President's commission.[8] We could turn to the various moves within the EEC to create a community languages policy.[9] There is clearly no lack of evidence to show that our deteriorating international trade position and the insularism of much of our present diplomacy is profoundly affected by our linguistic isolation.

If we turn now to what educational psychology and applied linguistics tell us of the second-language learning process, it appears that LANGUAGE LEARNING or PROFICIENCY IN THE USE OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE arises when there is:

1) Maximisation of exposure to a rich variety of foreign language source-materials from which a learner may derive and internalise the 'rules' of language.
2) Maximisation of activities within the language (or language-uses) modelled on the activities a learner is preparing for in life and involving both spoken AND the written symbols.
3) The creation and imitation of contextualised models of target language behaviour to allow for the fact that the second-language learner operates not in a bain de français let alone an immersion situation, but a douche discontinue.
4) Analytical support to exploit the analytical abilities of the advanced learner.
5) Concentration on the learning processes rather than those of teaching, to create conditions for optimal learning.

Whether you turn to Corder, Wilkins, Wilkinson or Brumfit you will find the same diagnosis. None claims that applied linguistics can offer a clear

methodological prescription for language studies, but all note it disposes quite rapidly of traditional methods centred primarily on study of the written language in its literary registers supported by a deductive approach to grammar and lexis through translation. This consensus does not, however, state that oral-aural skills alone are the basis of language learning. Indeed Wilkins notes that 'there is no justification for giving long term priority to spoken language in one's teaching method' and that 'every effort should be made to associate spoken and written symbol in the learning process.'[10] It is therefore apparent to me that the primary aim should not be to place oral-aural skills in a uniquely privileged place, but to place them in their proper place in the language-learning process for the advanced adult learning and so create real linguistic proficiency. However, since the kind of proficiency we create is conditioned by the teaching and learning situation we operate then I would also prefer the balance of skills in teaching to be one which is devised to answer the social and professional needs of graduates.

Logically therefore we should now turn to the language learning syllabus, but before I do so it should be noted that discussion of the needs of graduates in language courses should not blind us to the fact that by far the most important beneficiaries of any communicative reform at school level will be those who do not intend to make languages their primary subject, namely all those able all-rounders, scientists, historians, economists, political scientists, etc who have hitherto been denied a form of language study of any direct use to them and who may now continue with language study alongside their primary subjects. The new 16-plus language examinations would suit them perfectly. The I-level is aimed precisely at the able non-linguist, the scientist with an aptitude for languages. Language teachers will therefore now continue to teach the best linguists where before they lost them. That same group will enter university science and commerce courses with a language skill which they will have to abandon unless they choose combined honours such as Engineering and French, French and Business Studies. Unless we are very careful we shall distort the pattern of application by students by forcing them to go not to the best Physics, Engineering or Economics Department but to that small group of universities where combined honours are programmed. The answer, to my mind, is not to rely exclusively on combined honours arrangements but to provide ancillary studies at most universities with language departments accepting a service role in courses of, say, Politics WITH a modern language. This points, therefore, to a university language provision for the non-specialist as well as for the specialist, and to the development of a major national provision of ancillary language studies at all levels from age 16.

II. A COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING SYLLABUS

What first of all are the linguistic needs of the graduate in social and professional life? Technical needs will vary considerably, of course, and there is no guarantee that the language a graduate needs will be the one he studied at school or university. If we thought at all of needs there would be much more Japanese studies, more Spanish and Portuguese, more Arabic. Yet

if we think of our needs in any language, what we expect of ourselves is the capacity to operate with near-native levels of articulacy and fluency, with sensitivity to the social and professional status of our contacts and giving a convincing image of ourselves in the foreign language, handling the normal uses to which language is put (its 'functions'), and able to operate alone, without support from dictionaries or phrasebooks. We should be able to overcome our shyness of error and our own linguistic gaps.

If we translate these social demands into potentially teachable language-skills they might embrace the following:

1) Receptive skills: the ability to grasp the core meaning from authentic French materials spoken or written, to pick up illustrative examples, to pick out and be able to reuse the vocabulary and idiom fundamental to the particular area, and the capacity to digest all of this for re-use in a way which does not usually allow reading from a script.
2) Productive skills: the ability to speak autonomously, that is from memory, or from prompt-notes alone and to provide a clear objective report, setting out the meaning logically even where the original source was not so arranged. The ability to give illustrations, to communicate surface and depth meaning and to do this without allowing one's own views to obtrude. Then to state an opinion, conduct an argument, persuade, dissuade, give orders, inflect statements, express an emotional attitude (confidence, diffidence, commitment, certainty, likes, pleasure, involvement etc). The ability to observe normal social and personal courtesies, to adopt an effective strategy for obtaining the purpose for which you are communicating. You should be able to do this in uninterrupted monologue OR, in a conversation where the rules of dialogue intervene and discourse is interrupted or discontinuous. All of these should be capable of being transposed, with appropriate transformations, into the written mode. In the process you should be capable of creating and preserving a personal persona or identity in the foreign language.
3) Analytical skills: you should have a theoretical command of the French grammar and lexical systems, but more important you should have an internalised grammar system to allow flexibility and eventually sophistication in response. Without such internalised mastery the range of expression and inflection available to you is unduly limited.
4) Social skills: to act as host, guest, correspondent, informal interpreter, translator, to converse on aspects of British and French life (conversation points), to converse simply with French learners of English and English learners of French, to face an oral examiner.

These may seem utopist, but I simply repeat that we judge ourselves by these standards and to the extent that we come to think that we have achieved proficiency it is within such terms. Yet clearly all of these cannot be the objectives of a communicative language teaching curriculum. Any syllabus definition must bear in mind factors other than needs, such as the psychology of the learner, and limitations in contact hours and preparation time. It is also usual to set aside an approach to French for Special Purposes simply

because it is not 'rentable' to explore so many different purposes and since they may later be approached by the student.

In the St Andrews course which forms part of the SUFLRA Honours communicative teaching project we set the following method of COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING:

1) RECEPTIVE SKILLS: Organisation of language input to create increased response to the target language, in spoken and printed forms. This ensures not merely maximisation of exposure to the authentic French language but sharpening of response to it. Students are trained to grasp surface and depth meaning, to extract significant details and core meaning, explicit or implied. They are trained to extract core-lexis and to summarise the content in a logical order. They then devise prompt-notes to allow them to speak about what they have read or heard. This approach is designed to engender a more active approach to the so-called receptive skills and to ensure progression from hearing/listening or from reading to registering and mobilising for re-use. In practical terms this phase is intended to be a pre-class activity.

2) PRODUCTIVE SKILLS: Oral and written self-expression in French. Students are trained to communicate the gist of the message from prompt-notes and without reading from a prepared text. They must introduce the statement, structure it and conclude. In succeeding classes they proceed to situations in which they state agreement or disagreement with what they have absorbed, persuade (arguing in favour or against it), and expressing various attitudes towards it. At all stages the nature of the response is to be determined by sociolinguistic factors (whom you speak to, in what role you speak). You will increasingly be required to make a register shift in reporting the message, presenting it from another viewpoint to a different audience.

Students are required to do this in the context of a reportage, an interview, interrogation, bilateral interpretation, committee game, etc. They are then required to use substantially the same material in a written form, again with clear directions as to the context. In early stages of the course activities are separately presented. In later stages activities involve conscious transfer between these functions.

Since all of this relates to prescribed tasks, which limits the authenticity in certain ways, the students are also required to keep a journal de bord, or personal diary in French. In this the instruction is to write what interests them, but to include in this a running commentary on some contemporary event in the French papers or radio (a Birkbeck technique).

3) ANALYTICAL WORK. Little discourse analysis has been done in the course development to date but it will develop. Present analytical work is on areas where teacher input is essential such as:

- French techniques for argument, persuasion etc.
- Themes such as tense usage, characteristics of the spoken language etc.

- Linguistic analysis of literary text as bridge to literary commentary.
- Oral prosework.
- Correction of class proses and essays related to the course outline where possible.

The theoretical support has furthest to develop, but it will be determined in part by empirical needs. I note en passant that this order of work corresponds closely to Michel Blanc's proposal that it is 'more important to continue to consolidate and extend one's resources for written expression in French than to concentrate on the technique of translation itself', and I note too his reference to the practice at the Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et Traducteurs of Paris University where students are first trained to express themselves orally and in writing before actually translating.

Two things should therefore be apparent in methodological terms. Firstly however important oral-aural skills may be as an objective, it would be an error to establish them on any separate footing at universities as objective and learning method. Language learning is multi-skilled in approach, whatever objective may predominate and to omit any single skill impairs proficiency in the others. Secondly, the St Andrews' curriculum has resisted taking Topics, Functions OR Activities as a primary element in course design. In place of this there has emerged a more pragmatic communicative course design in which the surface structure of the curriculum is one determined by methodological constraints.

Here, therefore, are the main factors we have seen as determining the success or failure of language teaching and learning in communicative studies.

III. A COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING METHOD

In the light of our experience in a pilot project sponsored by the Nuffield Foundation Small Grant scheme, and devised as part of a SUFLRA programme, the following elements appear fundamental to a reappraisal of language teaching and learning methods at university level:

1) The maximisation of exposure to and uses of the foreign language and the scheduling of activities which encourage the student to intensify receptive practice. Receptive practice becomes purposeful and operates both at the thematic/content level and at the lexical level. Since this involves a departure from translation techniques and from conventional pro rata résumé techniques in favour of 'gist-seeking' the procedures involve a major reapproach to receptive practice.

2) The devising of language uses/activities which enforce re-use of the receptive material and which reflect language functions/needs. Activities should also entail personal involvement, socio-linguistic manipulation or adjustment etc.

3) Careful progression between activities to allow induction to the activities themselves, a more systematic approach to the 'functions' and controlled exposure to sociolinguistic factors. This will also allow clear differentiation between objective and subjective or inflected reporting, argument, suasion etc, and the mastery of monologue or sustained discourse before facing the problems of dialogue or discontinuous dialogue.

4) The sequencing of the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) in a learning cycle or for mutual reinforcement. In methodological terms discussion has emphasised the skills as separate objectives that it was important to keep in balance. In the process the interdependence of the skills in any valid learning cycle or process has been underemphasised. The present method follows intensive receptive practice with intensive oral use, followed in due course by selective written use. In the process, therefore, we seek to avoid repeating the error of 'traditional' language teaching in placing undue emphasis on work within one skill in isolation from the others, whether this be written or oral/aural.

5) Error correction. Since oral-aural practice is a very efficient means for reinforcing error strategies have to be found for identifying and rectifying error ... This cannot be done thoroughly or adequately in oral-aural practice without interfering with that practice, though videotaping may hold out some solutions. Primarily error has to be handled through selective oral comment backed by thorough correction of written work.

6) Social skills: shyness inhibits production. It also produces characteristic error patterns. Productive oral work rapidly moves beyond interpersonal speaking into a form of public speaking and, since this is educationally a valid activity, it is best faced and not shirked. At the same time group dynamics, the roles of tutor and student respectively and the role of the foreign language assistant are à revoir.

7) Residual benefit: the danger of oral-aural methods might be that they generate ephemeral performance without residual consolidation. It is for this above all that the decision to ban scripted speech was made to enforce a degree of memorisation of lexical items, to encourage short-term memory and so change the nature of receptive work in a way that would enhance learning. We certainly build in spite of ourselves through repeated exposure and contact with the French language, but the relative advantages of schedules and unscheduled input, programmed and random exposure, have yet to be evaluated by proper tests. A communicative method has therefore to be seen to increase proficiency in the longer as well as the short term.

8) Finally the analytical support which the student mind will respond to. It remains to be seen how valuable sustained course work on semiology, sociolinguistic theory and other theoretical inputs will pay off, as opposed to sociolinguistic commentary in the context of authentic material encountered in use. We should note that two of these methodological aims, the creation of social skills and the reinforcement of short and medium term memory are of educational benefit to the student regardless of course or career.

IV. ACADEMIC FIRE-PROOFING

We might conclude on a review of the implications of this approach for the academic or intellectual training of the student, as distinct from his training in a specific skill.

There is no need to exaggerate in order to claim clear academic qualities for this concept of language learning. In theoretical terms the communicative language learning method has an impeccable pedigree based on what we currently know of the psychology of the learner and of language learning, as indeed on applied linguistics. This is not the case for traditional language teaching methods.

In reference to traditional objectives (the study of the literary registers and command of the written skill) then it has to be said that conventional methods make inflated claims that do not survive inspection of results in classwork or in final examination scripts. Essay work in particular has caused considerable concern amongst language teachers. Whilst parallel claims by communicative methods exponents also require validation, self-expression in the written mode should be a normal part of the learning cycle in the communicative method. Essay work should therefore be a clear beneficiary. More importantly, however, it appears that what has lacked in conventional language teaching has been an adequate internalisation of the 'rules' as Wilkins stated: 'I know of no clear evidence that the best way to develop unconscious mastery of the rules of a language is through the initial conscious learning of those rules...'.[11] Communicative teaching on the other hand aims directly at the internalisation of the rules reinforced but not replaced by theoretical support and by error correction. Communicative teaching achieves this continuously through contact with the authentic French language in receptive and productive forms. In so far as it confronts the student with language variety, it makes serious discussion of the systems of the French language and synchronic studies far more fruitful.

Linguistic analysis has no formal boundary with literary commentary, and experience suggests that it is more successful to proceed from linguistic to literary commentary within a passage than to attempt to generate linguistic commentary from an overtly literary exercise. In this sense, communicative methods are not merely a bridge with literary studies but potentially the most effective approach to l'écriture.

A final but more important point is that foreign intellectuals and professionals are verbalisers, articulate, fluent and linguistically proficient in their tongue. The French educated middle classes are socially sensitive, cultured and respond to similar qualities in their foreign contacts, whether scholars or businessmen. A high level of linguistic proficiency is not simply a survival-situation passport but a passport to the intimacy and acceptance of those we meet. In the most practical of terms it means that we meet not just those who happen to speak English in a foreign setting but those we really should meet, our real counterparts, their families, those we really have to convince.

In terms of university study too we may seriously doubt the literary competence of those without certain levels of linguistic proficiency. So much of what a Pascal, La Fontaine, Voltaire or Sartre writes is audience-orientated, a linguistic strategy that the term 'style' hardly covers. So much of what is truest of a de Gaulle or a Proust is in the resonances of their language. So many translations change the nature of what is being said by the author, not merely his words. So much so-called 'literary commentary' covers themes without reference to language and then glosses the language in ways that show total uncertainty as to what 'style' is, and what can be said about it. Lectures on stylistics alone can hardly cure this. The breaking down of the myth that language and thought are separable is central to any communicative approach to language learning and it must affect the quality of literary study itself.

What colleagues perhaps question in casting doubt on the academic value of this form of study is their own self-confidence in the role of language teacher in this new guise. Moving from guru to animateur is by no means the least demanding aspect of this work. Moreover very few within the profession have research qualifications in this field and it becomes less easy to relate personal research and teaching in this area. Nor did the terrible years of Skinner enhance the appeal of this work. Add to that the removal of all funding in 1970 by the government of the day, the consequent depletion of the reservoir of competent manpower and the low rating in which language teaching is held by some and the picture is not reassuring. We are forced to advertise for these language teaching animals but we are inclined to view them as mongrels rather than academic borzoi. The low status of this area, the insufficiency of qualified manpower, the unconcern of the UGC and DES and the unavailability of funding make our situation even worse.

The Economic and Social Research Council, formerly the SSRC, has come to our aid but so far has not adapted to all our needs. There are immense areas where there is a research vacuum that we have to fill before we may make claims that we cannot always justify at present. There is a communication gap, to make matters worse, between ourselves as language teachers in universities and applied linguisticians and university educationalists. Few of them concern themselves with our field and yet they will claim that their questions should be answered and their standards adhered to.

I suggest therefore that we proceed to establish the communicative methodology with scrupulousness and integrity and that we gradually create a satisfactory research base in those areas where it is lacking at present, or where research conducted in other fields is tested in language teaching. Having said this the fact still remains that this degree of scruple has not been general in university language teaching before now and that the evidence from existing research, set out above, leaves no doubt that only this way may real linguistic proficiency be achieved. Society demands this proficiency of us and the effects of this form of language learning have clear and positive implications for academic studies. It is not, therefore, a choice between linguistic proficiency and academic integrity or the intellectual development of the student. If communicative studies are designed in the manner

suggested then the three are closely interlinked. They will only fall short of this standard if resources for their proper development continue to be refused by universities, UGC and government and if research and development fail to generate course materials and methods of an appropriate type.

NOTES

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3. DICKSON, Campbell: 'The State of Modern Languages' in Collaborative Research Newsletter, 1979, Centre for Educational Sociology, Edinburgh University.

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9. Education Action Programme at Community Level. The Teaching of Languages in the Community, Commission of the European Communities, COM (78) 222 Final, 1978.

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11. WILKINS, D A: Linguistics in Language Teaching, p 173.